THE FIRST FRVITS OF THE RESVRRECTION.

A SERMON PREACHED ON EASTER DAY, AT St. PETERS in the East, *in Oxford.*

By IOHN PRIDEAVX, Doctor of Divinity, *Regius Professor*, and Rector of *Exeter Colledge.*

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1. Cor. 15.20.

But now Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.

THis day is this Scripture fulfilled in our eares, (B.) and containeth the happiest tidings that ever was imparted to flesh and blood. For *fiducia Christianorum* (as *Tertullian* begins his booke *de Resurrectione carnis*) is *resurrectio mortuorum*. The chiefest string that *Christians* haue to their bow, is their vndoubted perswasion, that the dead shall rise againe. This *the truth* (saith he) *constraines* vs to *beleeue*: this *truth* is reuealed in Gods Word; this *Reuelation* is no where expresst in shorter and plainer tearmes, then in these words of the blessed Apostle, which now I haue read vnto you. I shall

not need to waſt time, or ſuſpend your patience with an *over-logicall* demonſtration of the coherence with that which went before. It may ſuffice by the way, only to take notice of *Firſt*, the Apoſtles auditory; *Secondly*, his manner of proceeding. His *Auditors* were the *Corinthians*, great *Critikes*, prone to *factions* and *emulations*, ſtanding much vpon their *Philoſophy* and ſtraines of *ſubtilities*, whereby the Apoſtles plaine courſe of *teaching* was contemned as vulgar, his perſon vnderualued, his *Followers* eſteemed *weake* and *ſimple*, as his *apology* diſcouereth in the foure firſt chapters. Beſides this, they had gotten a tricke to bolſter out one another, for what miſdemeanour ſoeuer, and to vndergoe rather the *frowne* of any *forraine iuriſdiction*, then quietly to haue matters compoſed among themſelues, chap. 5. and 6. And how could *this ſhufle* but draw on greater ſcandals, as quarrelling about *Virginity* and *marriage*, which would haue the *preeminence*? chap. 7. *Abuſe of Chriſtian liberty* to the ouerthrow of their weaker brethren, chap. 8. and 9. *Irreuerent behauiour* both of men and women at *Prayers*, *Sermons*, and receiuing of the *Sacraments*, chap. 10. and 11. Odious *compariſons* betweene *Preachers* and *Linguiſts*, *tongues* and *miracles*, miracles and other *ſpirituall gifts*, as if any of theſe were our owne, or if other vſe then to edify one another, from the beginning of the 12. to the end of the 14. chapter. No marvaile then if in a Church ſo tainted, ſome tell, out of their preſumptuous profaneneſſe, to queſtion alſo

so the *Resurrection*: which, how the Apostle here meets with in this 15. chapter, may be noted farther as a patterne for *disputants* in *divinity* to imitate. For first hee comes not vpon them with Philosophicall *Quiddities*, or apocryphall *fragments*, to justify an article of such consequence. Nay (saith he) *I haue deliuered vnto you, first of all that which I also haue receiued, how that Iesus Christ died for our sinnes according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose againe the third day according to the Scriptures*, verse 3.4. The *Scriptures* therefore are the grounds, & foundation of Apostolike building. And that according to the *Scriptures*, all things came to passe, hee bringeth in *eye-witnesses*, verse, 5.6. *Cephas* the *Foreman*, and if his word would not bee taken, an eleuen more of the same ranke to justify it. And in case also that these should bee excepted against, vpon a suspition of partiality, there are ready *fiue hundred* brethren besides, which all saw Christ *at once*, after his Resurrection, and divers were *aliue* at that time to witnesse it. And least our Apostle might bee noted, as too confident vpon *heare-say*, last of all hee was *seene of mee also* (saith hee) *as of one borne out of due time*, the *last* and the *least*, but all comes to one, *for whether it be I or they, so we preach, and so yee beleeued.*

But here the Corinthians might except, admitting these proofes as strong for the *Resurrection* of Christ: Doth it thereupon also follow, that our bodies shall likewise bee raised? Yes

(saith the blessed Apostle) otherwise there were no avoiding of those prodigious absurdities, *preaching* and *faith* should bee vaine, the *Apostles* found false *witnesses*, the *living*, in their sinnes, the *dead*, *perished*, *Christians*, of all professions the most *miserable*. Let a Scholler then gather the arguments, and he shall finde the first fairely *categoricall*. That which the *Scripture* hath expressedly delivered, and so many eye-witnesses beyond exception are ready to avouch, must needs bee true without contradiction, and cannot bee denied without impiety; But *Scriptures* and *witnesses* are *cleare for Christs resurrection*: therefore that is an argument beyond all exception. The second is *Hypotheticall*, forcing a number of intolerable *absurdities*. If Christians are not to rise againe by vertue of Christs Resurrection, as Christ did, then the *Preaching* of the Apostles is a foppery, the *faith* of Christians vaine, the *forgivenesse* of their sinnes, a fancy, the *hope* of their dead, a delusion, their estate in this life, beyond all others the most wretched; but such *inferences* are no way to bee indured; therefore it must be ever firmely held, that not onely Christ rose againe, but that Christians by vertue of his Resurrection, are also to be raised. Vncontroleable therefore is this *minor proposition*, which the Apostle here assumeth, *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept*. I could not passe along this goodly *Field of Corne* (B.) without plucking *some eares*, which were eminent above the rest: for where may a

man presume rather then in such an Auditorie as this, where *Knowledge*, and *Humours* abound, and the Divell is most busie? that some are *proud*, and *factious*, standing vpon their gifts, to the vilifying and discouraging of their weaker brethren? others profane and peremptory, to reject all good order, irreuerently to abuse the Word and Sacraments, and turne all Gods graces into a *customarie wantonnesse?* On the other side, what hearers may be imagined to bee more vnderstanding of the *Apostles Logicke*, for setling of their own consciences against all *Atheisticall opposers*, and the profitable imparting of it to the strengthening of others? Every one therefore in his passage may *rubbe* out the *Corne* of such *eares* as hee liketh. I shall deale with the whole *heape*, which the Apostle hath here in good *measure*, and *running over*, shaken together, in this narrow vessell: *But now Christ is risen againe, and become the first fruits of them that slept.*

3. The words, as you see, of their own accord, fall asunder into these two parts. First, the *ground of our Resurrection*, in these, *But now Christ is risen from the dead.*] Secondly, the *Fruits* of this *rising* of *Christ*, *And is become the first fruits of them that slept.*] The first includeth the *cause*, the second the effect, of the greatest good that ever befell mankinde. Ioyne both together, and no Logicke ever instanced in the like *Enthymeme: Christ is risen again, therefore we shall also rise.* That *Merchant* can never breake, who hath sold all to purchase this *Plot* of ground; and thrice happy is

that *beneficed man*, who hath so payed his first *fruits*. When the witty *Athenians* heard this doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead, Act. 17. howsoeuer some *Epicures*, and *Stoicks* gaine-sayd, verse 18. others *mocked*, verse 32. yet the wiser sort were desirous to haue it *repeated againe*, and certaine claue vnto *Paul*, and beleeued, of the *Noblest* and *best ranke* amongst them, as *Dionysius* the *Areopagite*, and a woman named *Damaris*, and others of both sexes, by their good example. Wee are all Christian *Peripatetiques* (B.) and therefore as our Apostle elsewhere admonisheth vs, Rom. 13. ὡς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ εὐσχημόνως περιπατήσωμεν, *must walk honestly as in the day*, and be armed against the *Epicurisme* and *Stoicisme* of such brutish opposers. Now the custome of the place will shortly call for a *repetition*, and I make no doubt, but many a *Denys* and *Damaris* will sticke to that which shall bee spoken. This is a day of *good tidings*, and better then the Lepers could bring to the almost starued *Samaritanes*, of the flight of their besiegers, and the *plenty* left behinde them, and therefore we should not doe well to hold our peace; for now is *Christ risen from the dead*] the *ground* of our *former* freedome and future happinesse, which commeth now in order to be first thought on.

4. *But now is Christ risen from the dead.*] If I did not purposely now abstaine from controversies, I could here from this particle νῦν, referred to the word ἀπαρχὴ, *now* is Christ the *first Fruites*, take occasion to discusse against some needlesse muttering in these dayes. First, what became of the

Fathers

Fathers before the *Resurrectiõ* of Christ? whether they were in *Limbo* (which *Bellarmine* in his *sermons* of the *Resurrection*, takes for a ground, and Rhetorically descants vpon) and many of the *Fathers* and *Schoolemen* giue way to it: or else enjoy the *presence of God*, in a degree of happinesse, competent to soules *separated*: as also from the word *Christ*, referred to ἐγήγερται *Christ raised*, to require whether this were done by his owne *Power*, as *Redeemer*, or else by Gods *Omnipotencie*, helping His *inferioritie*, as a distinct Agent, with that *ability* that he wanted in himselfe, for such an atchieuement. Besides, a doubt might bee also moued concerning the *obiect raysed*, whether it were the *person intire*, or *natures dissevered*; and if so, whether the *Godhead*, or *manhood*: or if the *manhood*, whether the *body* only, or *Soule*, or *both*, or how? The *Schoolmen* you know *make work* for such speculations, vpon the 3. of the *sentences*, the 21. distinct. and the 3. part of *Aquinas* the 53. question. The practice whereof we haue in *Abulensis* on the 22. of Matth. spending at least 24. *disputations* vpon this and the like *curiosities*. And lastly, quarrels might arise, and are pickt, from the words ἐκ νεκρῶν, *from the dead*, what should bee the *terminus*, or bound, from whence the Soule of Christ *returned*, whether from *Purgatorie*, or the *prison* of the *Patriarckes*? (as too many haue ventered to define) or from *Paradice*, or *Hades* of *Blessed Spirits*, as others would haue it; or that his descent was no farther then the *grave*, and the *passion torments*, as a third sort stifly defend. But this dayes solemnitie,

tie, houres compasse, places custome, your expectations, should bee wronged, to bee so entertained, being content (I trust) to take by the way in grosse: First, that the *Fathers* before Christ, and those that follow, like the *Cherubims* within the *vayle*, looke vpon the same *Mercy-seat*: For Christ
Apocal. 13. 8. was the *Lambe* slayne from the *beginning* of the *World*, in Gods immutable purpose, and therefore takes away the *sinnes* of the *World*, as well before,
1. Cor. 10. as after this *actuall Resurrection*. *Brethren, I would not haue you ignorant* (saith our blessed Apostle) *that all our Fathers were vnder the cloud, and in the Sea; and were all baptised vnto Moses, in the cloud, and in the Sea, and did all eate the same Spirituall meat, and did all drinke the same Spirituall drinke; for they dranke of the spirituall Rocke that followed them, and that Rock was Christ*. Secondly, that the *Person* of this Christ was raysed, the Godhead (one with the *Father* and the *Holy Ghost*, and the same *Actor* in all externall effects) reducing, and
Ioh. 10. 17. conjoyning the soule againe to the body, *I haue power to lay downe my life and to take it*. Thirdly, that this returne both of soule and body, was from the *state* of the *dead*, by loosing the *fetters* of *death* and *Hell*, in which it was *impossible hee should be withholden*, Acts 2. 24. This may satisfie for the present, those that can content themselues to bee wise with *sobriety*. My progresse therefore shall rather touch on these especiall passages, that concerne the *mayne*. First, *how* this *resurrection* of our Sauiour in the old *Testament* was *prefigured* and *fore-prophecied*. Then, how manifestly fore-told

by *himselfe*, and shrewdly feared by his *persecutors* before his death: Afterward, how vncontrolably witnessed, both on the *present* day, when it was done, as also in the *forty dayes*, wherein hee conversed with his Disciples, before his *ascension*. For this especially maketh for the setling of our Faith in this *grand Article*. This is *opus diei*, the work of the day, which Satan cannot endure wee should take due notice of: we are all negligent (beloued) & need remembrancers to mind vs of that which we knowe in the most receiued points of Christianity: 'tis to good purpose therefore, though no new thing may bee brought to informe the vnderstanding, to set the meditations notwithstanding on working, to recount with *Selah's* and *Hallelujah's*, *Tehillah's*, *and Tephillah's*, all praises and thanksgiuings for the infinite benefites we haue receiued.

5. And here for the *old Testament*, if the bringing of *Ioseph* out of the *pit* and *prison*, *Moses* from among the *flags*; *Samsons* rising at mid-night from the middest of his enemies, and carrying away the gates of *Gaza* on his backe: the quitting of the *three Children* from the *Furnace*, and *Daniel* from the *Lions denne* (which the *Fathers* take as *Types* of the *Resurrection*) should be called in question; I shall proceed more *vrgently*, to demande with *Isaiah*, *Who was he that came from Edom* with died *garments*, from *Bosrah*, *glorious in his apparell, and trauelling in the greatnes of his strength?* What is meant by his *treading the Wine-presse alone*; and *staining* all his *rayment* with the blood of the trampled, *Chap. 53. 1.*

trampled, but the victorie of Christ ouer *death*, and *hell*, in this *day of his Resurrection*? This the Father himselfe acknowledgeth, Psalm. 2.7. *Thou art my beloued Sonne, this day haue I begotten thee:* which according to the *Apostles* comment, Acts 13.33. is referred not to his *Eternall generation*, or *temporall incarnation*, but to this (*hodie*) of his *resurrection*. Of the same, the *Sonne* interprets the being of *Ionas* in the Whales belly, Matth. 12. 39. And who knowes not that the holy Ghost by two Apostles, both Saint *Peter* and Saint *Paul*, denyes that Text in the 16. Psalme, *Thou shalt not leaue my soule in hel*, to be *properly meant of David*, but *principally*, (though Typically) of that *holy One*, who lay not so long buried as to see corruption. Such euidences the *old Testament* affords vs, which are notwithstanding but *glimpses*, and *shadowes*, in comparison of those wee haue in the New; where it is obseruable as a thing extraordinary, that *this article* is cleared more, then any of the rest. That the Disciples might no way doubt of it, hee foretells them in plaine tearmes, Matth. 20. 18. *Behold, we goe vp to Ierusalem, and the Sonne of man shalbe betrayed vnto the chiefe Priests*, and vnto the *Scribes, and they shal condemne him to death, & shal deliuer him to the Gentiles to mocke, and to scourge, and to crucifie him, but the third day he shall rise againe.* And howsoeuer the Iewes tooke aduantage of a speech of his to this purpose, *Destroy this temple, and in three dayes I wil raise it vp*, Ioh. 2. 19. and made it the chiefe ground of their *accusation* against him, Matth. 26. 61. Yet their importunity with

with *Pilate*, to haue his Sepulchre sealed, and their care to set a watch about it, of their owne faction, discouered their more then suspition, that hee might rise againe, as they remembred that it was giuen out when he was aliue, that hee had foretold himselfe. All these assurances before his Passion, make for the certainetie of his Resurrection. But greater *evidences* follow after, that admit no delusion. If a man should but deale with the fee'd *Ianizaries* of the *High Priests* and *Scribes*, vpon their owne grounds, their owne testimonie were enough to convince them. *His Disciples* (say they) *came by night, and stole him away while wee slept. Mentita est iniquitas sibi.* O the sottishnesse of humane policy, when once it beginnes to tamper against the determinate counsell of the Almighty! His *Disciples*, a few, and silly vnarmed men, that were at their wittes ende, to thinke what should become of themselues, a poore sort of *scattered sheep* of a *smitten Shepheard*, that fled from him when hee was yet aliue, would they vpon the suddaine bee so hardy, as to venter their deerest liues, to recouer a mangled carcase, in so desperate a piece of service, so vnlikely to take effect, so hazardous to the vndertakers, so little beneficiall, if they had succesſe? why had they not then attempted to doe it (as *Chrysostome* well obserueth) the first night, before the *Guard* of *Souldiers* was set: for the text is plaine, Mat. 27. 62. It was the next day following his funerall, before the souldiers came, and so long the stone and seale had remained vntouched. To omit the vn-

Mat. 28. 13.

likely

likelyhood of *vnbinding* him, and leauing the *linnen* clothes behinde, in a case requiring so much dispatch; they are manifestly taken in their owne tale: For if the *Souldiers were asleep* (as they blanch the matter) *quomodo furtum viderunt?* (sayeth *Rhemigius* out of Saint *Augustine*) how could they witnesse that his Disciples stole him? But if they were waking and saw it, what letted them to hinder it, and apprehend the attempters? No: if they had made enquiry, and desired to be rightly informed, many in *Ierusalem* would haue told them of *opening* of other *graues* besides this, for company, and that of knowne and *holy Saints*, long before that time buried, and their bodily appearing vnto divers, to shew there was somewhat more then the theft of a few poore *fishermen*, which was accompanied with the strangenesse of so great a *miracle*. All which circumstances notwithstanding, might bee spared in regard of the *proofes* that *followe*, which doubtlesse are so distinctly registred by the Penmen of the *Holy Ghost*, not to be taken in *grosse*, but *particularly* considered, for the stirring vp of our faith and devotions.

Tom. 10. Hom. 26.

Mat. 27. 52.

6. Some later Divines, for *order* and *memory*, ranke them into *Apparitions*, and *Testimonies*. His *appearances* afore his Resurrection were either the *same day* it was done, or in the *forty dayes* following, before his Ascention. The same day, wee read that he appeared *fiue times*. To *Mary Magdalen*, out of whom hee had cast seuen Divels, making so notorious a *Convert*, the first *Evangelist* of his Resur-

Resurrection, Mar. 16. 19. To *her* againe, and the other *Mary*, admitting them then to touch his *feete*, and *worship*, and to *carry newes* thereof to the Disciples, Math. 28. 9. Thirdly, to *Cleophas* and his fellow, as they were going to *Emmaus*, instructing them first as a stranger in this very point, and afterward, discouering himselfe in breaking of bread, Luk. 24. Fourthly, to *Cephas* or *Peter* alone, as you haue in the fift verse before my text. And last of all, to all the *Disciples*, (*Thomas* onely wanting,) where they were assembled together, the doores being shut, shewing them his hands, and his side, for their more assurance, that it was no delusion; and taking them so together, that if one would not trust his owne eyes, he might bee confirmed by his *fellowes*, who saw it as well as himselfe, Iohn 20. 19. So speedily, the very same day, with such evidence, so often, was the *Article* of the *Resurrection* confirmed. In the *forty daies* after, we haue *sixe* of the like *appearances*. To the *Apostles*, (and *Thomas* being among them) eight daies after, whose *doubting* gaue occasion for the farther instruction of all, Iohn. 20. 27. To *Peter* and sixe more of the *Disciples*, as they were a fishing at the sea of *Tiberias*, Iohn 21. 2. To *Iames*, (as some conjecture) for the strengthning him against his *martyrdome*, being the first of the Apostles that was to suffer, Acts 12. To the eleven *Disciples* vpon a mountaine in *Galilee*, to make good that he had promised by the women, Matt. 28. To more then *fiue hundred* brethren at once, mentioned here by our *Apostle*. And to all those last

last of all, that were present at his ascention, from the *mount of Olives*, Actes 1. To which eleuen *Apparitions*, before his *Ascension*, if wee ad that to Saint *Paul* Actes 9. it will make vp the full *dozen* or *Iury*, to *quit* our cause, and *cast* opposers. But if apparitions should seeme to any too subiect to counterfeiting, we haue a *cloud* of witnesses besides to confirme it. From heauen, of *Angels*, *Hee is risen, hee is not here*, satisfie your owne eyes, *come see the place where the Lord lay*, Matth. 28. From women in earth, who were vnlike in such a case to vent a gull, because they scarce beleeued it themselues, *They haue taken away* (saith *Mary Magdalen*, who little thought of his rising) *the Lord out of the sepulchre, and I know not where they haue laid him*, Iohn 20. From the Disciples, who had eyes enow vpon them, to trippe them for saying in the least circumstance: whereupon they esteemed the first relation of the women, as idle tales, before experience had taught them that the *Lord was risen indeed, and had appeared to Simon*, Luk. 24. 34. These things were so sifted, so euident, so manifest on all hands beyond exception, that impudency it selfe might stand amazed, not daring in any sort to disavow it. It was made apparant to *Iewes* and *Gentiles* of both professions, to *Disciples* and *Souldiers*, *Clergy* and *Laity*, to *men* and *women*, both *sexes* were satisfied, in the *Evening* and *Morning* no *time* excluded. In the *garden*, vpon the *way*, in the *Citty*, at the *sea*, vpon a *mountaine* in Galilee, vpon another, overlooking *Ierusalem*, within *doore*, *without*, no *place* ever shunned.

Luke. 24. 11.

ſhunned. They could not bee deluded by *hearſay*, for their *eyes* ſaw him, a *miſt* was not caſt before their eyes, for their *eares* heard him. As neere as might be he came to their *ſmelling*, (if ſuch a ſence were fit to diſterne in ſuch a caſe) for hee *breathed* vpon them, they beheld him *eate* and *drinke* with them, of ſuch meate as was by *miracle* provided for them, wherein *taſt* might haue his portion in the diſcouery. But more then all the reſt, he ſhewed them his *hands* and his *ſide*; told them, that a *ſpirit* could not haue *fleſh* and *bones*, as he had; willed them to *handle* him, cauſed *Thomas* to thruſt his *hand* into the *wound* in his ſide, for his owne and the fullet ſatisfaction of them all. It were ſtrange therefore that *touching*, and *handling*, the ſenſe of *feeling*, ſo *often*, ſo *freely*, by ſo *many* admitted, to make *experiment* about it's proper obiect, ſhould in ſo maine a point bee deluded. Out of all which *premiſes* you ſee the Apoſtles *concluſion*, and the ground of our faith inferred in the very words as my text hath it: *Now is Chriſt riſen from the dead*; which I haue laboured ſo fully to declare, not ſo much to conuince *oppoſers*, as to confirme the weake *beleeuers*.

Luke.10.22.

Luke.24.29.

7. For here I make no doubt (B.) but all good *Chriſtians* will bee forward for application to themſelues. Some vpon the conſideration of Satans abſolute ouerthrow, *hells* harrowing, *deaths* ſwallowing vp in victory, will follow the conquerours triumphs, with their heartyeſt acclamations. Others in a ſort deiected, with the meditation of his former *paſſion*, will now cheere

vp

vp their thoughts in this glorious amends; As the *Israelites* for their escape from *Pharoah*, *Debo-rah* for the defeating of *Sisera*, the *Israelitish women* for the ouerthrow of *Goliah*, expressed their exceeding ioy in *set songs*, and *thankes-giuings*: Much more euery one in this case, should turne sacred *Poets*, and make holy *Anthems*, to their owne soules and consciences, to celebrate the solemnity of this *Festivity*. O what ioy must it needs be to a *good heart*, to recount, that when the *Deuill* and his *complices* had spit all their venome, against the only meanes of our Redemption, when they had (as they supposed) taken the *Lion* in a trappe, deliuered him to the laylour *Death*, (if I may so speake) without *bayle* and *mainprise*, shackled him sure with bolts and seale, for ever stirring to disturbe them againe; That then the Lord awaked *as one out of sleepe, and like a Giant refreshed with wine*! *He smote his enemies in the hinder parts, & put them to a perpetuall shame.* Then the huge *Stone* was *rolled* away, the *Seales* broken, the *Guard* frighted, the whole *plot* spoyled. What ayled thee, O thou *Earth*, that thou so *trembledst*, and thou *Stone*, that thou wast so *driuen* backe? yee *Souldiers*, that yee fled like cowards, and yee *graues* of the *Saints*, that yee could not keepe in your dead? It was the Lord that returned from the slaughter, leading *captivity captiue*, and now hauing *drunke* of the *brooke in the way*, lifted vp his head to be Ruler in the *midst of his enemies*. Long was it before his deareſt *Followers* could bee possessed with this truth, but ha-

uing

uing once the hynt, how their *hearts burned* within them to impart it to others. *Mary ranne* to bring the Disciples word: *Peter* and *Iohn ranne* to see whether it were truth or no. The two Disciples could not rest in *Emmaus*, (howsoever like to be benighted,) but backe they must the same *houre to Ierusalem*, to acquaint their fellowes what had befalne them in their walke: Their fellowes prevented them with the same newes, before they could haue time to speake. Amongst all which congregations, no doubt but the *blessed Virgin* his mother bare the most affectionate part, which notwithstanding is no where here mentioned: to shew, that this spirituall Iubile was beyond the taking notice of the neerest earthly relation. No (B.) we need not faine the *Suns dancing*, or *Hermes vision*, or *Paschasinus* holy *well* that was filled of his owne accord every *Easter day*, or the annuall rising, as vpon this day, of certaine *bodies* of *Martyrs*, in the sands *of Egypt*, which some frivolously maintained, to amplifie the glory of this Resurrection. *Aquinas* giueth fiue reasons of it: The *commendations* of Gods *Iustice*, which was to recompence so great *humiliation* with the like *exaltation*: the strengthening of our *faith* the assurance of our *hope*: the reforming of our *liues*: the complement of our *Salvation*. Hee might haue added for a sixt out of the blessed *Apostle*, His mightily declaring himselfe to bee the Sonne of God, Rom. 1. But all these are in a manner comprised in the part of my text that followeth, being the effect and fruit of Christs Re-

Mat. 28. 8.
Ioh. 20. 3.
Luk. 24. 33.
Luk. 24. 34.
p. 3. q. 53. art. 1

surrection, which succeedeth now in this place to be likewise discussed.

8. *And become the first fruits of them that slept.*] I cannot more fitly enter vpon this second part of my text, then with the words of the *Psalmist*, *When the Lord turned againe the captivity of Sion, then were wee like vnto them that dreame*: As old *Iacob* at the relation of his sonne *Iosephs* being aliue, Gen. 45. the newes was beyond expectation so good, that he tooke it for a dreame, rather then a true narration. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with ioy. Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them, yea the Lord hath done great things for vs already, whereof wee reioyce.* The ground whereof is this, whereof I am now to speake: *Christ is risen from the dead, and is become the first fruits of them that slept.* Ἐγήγερται made, *become, not in acceptation only*, in regard of *Gods mercy* in admitting his sufferings for our sinnes, but by *desert* also, in satisfying the Iustice of God the Father, and paying the *vtmost farthing*, wherein mankinde had runne into *arrerages*. *Become the first fruits.*] Like vnto that is the *old Testament* sanctifying all the *after-harvest*, not of *all* without *a difference*, lying vnder deaths custody, but of thē that *slept*, in expectation of him before this *Resurrectiō*; & those that follow, who shall awake by vertue thereof, & as *mēbers*, follow the *Head*. *Our bones lay scattered before the pit* (saith *David*) *like as when one breaketh & heweth wood vpō the earth. And now, Sonne of man, thinkest thou that these bone can liue?*

Psal. 126.

Leu. 23. Rom. 11.

Psal. 141. 8.

Ezech. 37. 3.

I haue warrant to prophecy vpon them that they ſhall liue, and to make good what I ſay, out of this ground of our *Apoſtle: Chriſt is riſen from the dead, and by vertue of this reſurrection they ſhall ſurely liue.* You know (B.) by that which hath beene ſpoken, the *antecedent* being cleared, that *Chriſt is riſen againe*, the *conſequent* might be called in queſtion, (& is by *Fauſtus Socinus*) how thence it ſhould follow that wee ſhall alſo bee raiſed? This the Apoſtle wiſely foreſaw, and therefore maketh it good, by three invincible arguments. Two are couched in theſe few words, *Hee is become the firſt fruits of them that ſlept.* As the *firſt fruits* are accepted, ſo the whole maſſe ſpeedeth, and thoſe only that *ſleepe*, ſhall haue a time to awake. The *head* aboue the water, the *members* can never bee drowned. The third argument in the two next verſes following, is of like force: *As by man came death, ſo by man came the reſurrection, and if in Adam mans nature* offending, became the *priſoner* of *death*: why in the ſame reſtored by the Son of God, that aſſumed it to that purpoſe, ſhould not all in the like ſort be made aliue? It is true that ſome *bodily* roſe againe before this *Reſurrection* of *Chriſt*, as in the old *Teſtament*, the *widowes ſonne* of *Sareptaraiſed* by *Elias*, the *Sunamites ſon* by *Eliſha*, and *another* alſo at the *touch* of the ſame *Prophets bones* in the Sepulcher, long *after he was buryed: as alſo in the New, the Centurions daughter, the widow's ſonne of Naim*, putrified *Lazarus*, the brother of *Martha* and *Mary*: But the caſe betweene *their* Reſurrection and Chriſts, is much different.

De Chriſto Servat. p. 2. cap. 3.

First, in the *Effect*, these rose not to liue immortally, but to die againe, as the *Schoolemen* giue the reason. Secondly, in the *efficient*, Christ rose by his *owne* victorious power, but these by vertue of *this Resurrection* of *Christ*, as our reformed Writers more fully haue declared.

9 The order in which this shall come to passe, and *how* the *dead* shall bee *raised*, what *difference* there shall bee betweene these *corruptible carcasses of ours*, and the same *refined by this Resurrection*, how in the *Resurrection*, one starre shall differ from another in *glory*, and what shall become of those that are found *liuing* vpon the earth, at the Lords comming, is fully *added* by our *Apostle*, in that which followeth my text, but without the compasse of my intended scope. These texts sufficiently illustrate the point I haue now in hand. Christ is the *beginning*, the *first borne*, Colos. 1. 18. the *first begotten* of the *dead*, Apoc. 1. 5. The *fayth* in whose *Resurrection* shall saue vs, Rom. 10. 9. And therefore if wee beleeue, that *Iesus died, and rose againe, even so them also which sleepin Iesus, will God bring with him*. Which conclusion is in the words of the Apostle, 1. Thes. 4. 14. And this he so insisteth vpō in all his *trialls*, as though the *Creed of a Christian* had consisted of no more *articles*. In his tossing betweene the *Pharisees & Sadduces*, Men and *brethren* (saith he) *I am a Pharise, the sonne of a Pharise*, of the hope & *Resurrection of the dead I am called in question*, Act. 23. 6. After, before *Felix* the Governor, *I haue hope towards God, which they themselues allow, that*

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there ſhall bee a reſurrection of the dead both of iuſt and vniuſt, Act. 24. 16. before *Feſtus* and *Agrippa*, Why *ſhould it bee thought a thing incredible with you, that God ſhould raiſe the dead?* Chap. 26. 6. *And hauing therefore obtained helpe of God, I continue this witneſsing both to ſmall and great, ſaying none other things then theſe which Moſes and the Prophets did ſay ſhould come, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, and that hee ſhould be the firſt that ſhould riſe againe, and ſhould ſhew light vnto the people and to the Gentiles*, verſe 22. 23. Hee had reference no doubt to that of *Iſaiah*: *Thy dead men ſhall liue, together with my dead body ſhall they riſe: awake & ſing, yee that dwell in duſt, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth ſhall caſt forth her dead*, Ch. 26. 19. But what ſeeke we a ſurer diſcharge, then the *Maſter* himſelfe of this *firſt fruits Office* affords vs, *I am the Reſurrection, and the life: Hee that beleeueth in me, though hee were dead, yet ſhall he liue?* Ioh. 11. 25.

10. For farther amplifying of this point, I will not ſpend much time, to take notice of the ancient hereſies concerning it, reduced to fiue heads, and refuted by *Alphonſus de Caſtro*. The firſt (granting the ſoules immortality) denyed onely the bodies reſtoring, as *Simon Magus*, and his adherents, the *Ophytes*, *Valentinians* and *Carpocratians*. The ſecond, admitting the Reſurrection of the body, imagined it to bee ſo altered, and turned to a *Spirit*, that it could not bee ſaid to be the ſame. To refute this fancy, wherewith *Eutychus Biſhop of Conſtantinople* much troubled the

Church, *Gregorius* (before hee had the title of *Great* or *Pope*) made a journey thither from *Rome*, and handled the matter so wisely before *Tiberius* the Emperour, that *Eutyches*'s book *de Resurrectione* was adjudged to the fire. A fit dispatch also for the Divellish pamphlets of *Osiander* and his *damnable associates*, which now in this Sunneshine of the Gospell, (among diuers farre worse) set a-broach the same opinion. And the Arminians (as the world seeth) are too ready to take after them. The third heresie is laid to the charge of *Origen by Theophilus Alexandrinus*, as though hee should hold the *Resurrection of the Bodie* with such a clause, that after it had risen once, and so flourished for certaine ages, it should againe bee dissolued, and brought to nothing: but *Epiphanius* cleareth *Origen* for this, burthening him with the flatte deniall of the Resurrection of the body. In regard whereof, *Alphonsus* will credit neither of the relators, because their testimonies (saith hee) *concerning Origen*, doe not agree. As little heede is to bee giuen to the imputations of *Guido Carmelitanus* against the *Arminians*, putting on them, that they hold Christ rose vpon the *Saturday*, which *Alphonsus* make the fourth Heresie. For who findes not by Fryer *Waldensis*, and *Widdiford*, against *Wickliffe*, *Peter Cluniacensis*, against the *Petrobrusians*, *Bernard* of *Lutzenburg* and others, against the *Waldenses*, what small trust is to be giuen to such relators, when the Authors cannot be had, to speake for themselues? Last of all, there wanted not those who affirmed, that in the

Paschal. 2.

the Resurrection no *women* should bee found, but all then should bee *turned into men*; abusing that place of the *Apostle*, Ephes. 4. 13. of the growing of al vnto a *perfect man, vnto the measure of the fulnesse of the stature of Christ*. But Saint *Augustine* elegantly refutes them *De civitate Dei*, lib. 22. cap. 17. interpreting man in that place to include, as *homo*, both *sexes*; and wittily concluding out of the 22. of Matthew, where our Saviour tells vs, that in *the Resurrection they neither marry, nor are giuen in marriage: erunt ergo qui vel nubere hîc solent, vel ducere uxores, sed ibi hoc non faciunt.* Therefore shall then (saith he) *bee the parties which on earth were married, or marriageable*, but *there* they shall bee freed (as the *Angels*) from any such relations of *man* and *wife*. Now partly to giue some satisfaction to curious demanders, but more I thinke out of their itching *humours*, to make worke for their wit; the *Schoolemen* haue presumed to define of the qualities of those that shall *rise againe*, of their *stature, age, place, appearance, crownes, and coronets*, more then our Apostle, after his returne from the *third heauen*, ever thought fit to acquaint vs with. To better purpose a great deale the *Fathers* presse this point; *Iustine Martyr, Athenagoras, & Tertullian*, to cõvince the *Gentiles*; *Irenaus, Ephrem*, and *Augustine*, to stop the mouthes of *Heretikes*, *Gregory Nissene*, *Chrysostome*, *Cyprian*, and *Ambrose*, labour especially in a *concionatory* and *Paranetical* kinde of straine (wherein they were excellent) to settle the conscience, perswade the will, and strongly

to worke vpon the affection. Saint *Hierome* binds himselfe against the particular errours of *Iohn*, Bishop of *Ierusalem*. *Damascen* the *Greeke* master of the *sentences*, is full of collections out of the *Ancients*. *Lactantius*, *Prudentius*, *Hilarie* and *Paulinus*, tooke a delight to hallow their *divine* straine in Poetrie with so sacred a subject. *Sedulius* thought it not enough to intitle the memorable *Story* of the Bible, which he had comprised in verse in foure bookes, *Opus Paschale*, *Easter worke*: but needes hee must repeate the same againe in *prose* vnder the same title; which the last *Bibliotheca Patrum* hath now also taken in, from the Library of *Peter Pithœus*. The time allotted will scarce giue leaue, to point but at the scope of each of them. They never thought this doctrine of the *Resurrection* enough repeated, or sufficiently taught, or learned. Their Philosophicall answeres out of the grounds of the *Physickes*, to shew the *possibilitie* of it, their *reasons* borrowed from the *Ethickes*, to proue how it stands with *conveniency* and *iustice*, and their excellent *similitudes* of the *Phœnix*, *corne*, the *rising* of the *Sunne* after his *setting*, and the like to illustrate the same, are testimonies of their extraordinary learning, paynes, and piety, and patternes for vs to follow, in the due consideration of so Sacred a Mystery.

11. But alas (B.) our thoughts (for the most part) are taken vp with other matters: the commonnesse of this great treasure, maketh vs all to vnder-value it; wee can talke of it vpon occasion,

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acknowledge it to bee an eſpeciall *Article* of our *Creede*, brand with the deſerued note of *Infidell*, him that in any ſort ſhould *queſtion* it: and yet come too ſhort (God wot) in the due eſteeme of our *Saviours* conqueſt of death, the primatie and meritorious cauſe of it, or of the vertue of the *firſt fruits*, whereby the whole *maſſe* is hallowed, or the happy condition of thoſe, who are not *dead*, but *ſleepe*, and repoſed in their graues, as in a bed, at the voyce of the laſt *Trumpe* to awake againe. Surely our *Apoſtle* accounted all things but *droſſe* and *dung*, in regard of this Knowledge of *Chriſt*, and *the power of his Reſurrection*, Philipp. 3. 10. But our averſneſſe, and neglect is ſuch in this behalfe, that I feare me, ſuch *ſpiritual themes* are leaſt ſtudied vpon, and the Apoſtles price of this knowledge, amongſt the *wittes of this age*, held ſomewhat too deare. The conſideration of our Forefathers *devotion*, ſhould ſet an edge on our *dulneſſe*. Good God! what adoe there was betweene the *Eaſt* Church, and the *Weſt*, about the preciſe *time* of this ſolemnitie? All were for the thing, but the *emulation* was about the time, who in every circumſtance ſhould be moſt *exact*. Pope *Victor* and his adherents were for the *Sunday*, in regard that it was the day of the weeke, that our Lord roſe from the dead. *Polycarpus* and thoſe of the Eaſt Church, tyed themſelues to the time of the *Iewiſh Paſſeouer*, which might fall vpon any day of the weeke beſides. Theſe pretended *traditions* from *Iames* and *Iohn*: the other from *Saint Peter* and *Saint Paul*: And when *Irenæus* and other good

good men that interposed, were not able to take vp the matter, the Councell of *Nice* became so farre *Vmpyre* for the Sunday, (as wee finde related by *Athanasius* and *Eusebius*,) and *Constantine* the Emperour, so strongly backed it with his Imperiall letter, (which is yet to shew in *Socrates* and *Theodoret*) that the not-conforming to the *Councels* ordering in that behalfe, was made a branch of the *Quarto-decimanian heresie*. How justly this was done, and vpon what grounds, I censure not; those that desire to bee farther informed in the point, may read what *Hospinian de origine Festorum*: Bellarmine *in his 3d booke de cultu Sanctorum, cap. 12.* *Morney* in the beginning of his booke of the *mysterie* of *iniquity*, haue gathered out of the *Ancients*: only I may not omit that which a *Reuerend Bishop* of our Church hath farther obserued: Should wee esteeme so highly of *every Lords day*, that it may not be *prophaned*, or (because it is *de iure divino*) by the Church altered? And should *Easter day*, which containeth the *ground* of the *change*, from the *Iewish Sabbath*, to our *Sunday*, the *archetype* (as he calls it) or the *prototype* of all *Sundaies* in the *yeere*, bee in any sort scanted of its due celebration? What should I speake of the *Cycli Paschales*, or the *golden number*, sent by the *Alexandrians* to the *Romans*, as a rare invention in *golden letters*, for a directiue *Calender*, to find out the true seat of *Easter*, when *Hyppolitus* the Martyrs *Prime* (for now we so commonly call it) was found *erroneous*? *Dionysius* (also a Martyr) and *Bishop* of *Alexandria*, was ready to mend it; and as farther pro-

processe of time discouered any sensible difference, there wanted not care and study to set all right againe: so *Eusebius* corrected *Dionysius*; *Theophilus* of *Alexandria*, *Eusebius*; *Prosper*, *Theophilus*; *Victor* of *Aquitaine*, *Prosper*; *Victor Capuanus*, and *Dionysius Exiguus*, the former *Victor*. And when about the yeare 454. neere vpon the *Councell* of *Calcedon*, *Easter* fell so high in *Aprill*, that that they doubted they were in the wrong, what adoe keepes *Leo* in his Epistles to *Paschasinus* of *Lilibaum* in *Sicily*, to *Iulian* Bishop of the Ile of *Coos*, to the *Emperour Martian* himselfe, and his wife *Eudoxia*, to solicit *Proterus*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, to set all right againe. Where I enquire not why the *Popes infallibility* should not serue him to keepe a true account in Ecclesiasticall matters, as well as others? The like thing fell out in Saint *Ambrose's dayes*, and likewise in the time of *Innocent* the first. Vpon which occasion, we haue that Fathers 83. Epistle, to the BB. of *Æmilia*, and *Innocents* letter to *Aurelius*, *Bishop* of *Carthage*, intreating him to call a *Synode*, that the matter might be more fully bated. So highly they valued this times solemnity, in regard of the *first fruits* consecrated in Christs *Resurrection*, that they held the fayling in the smallest circumstance, a note of ingratitude, and a kinde of *sacriledge*. To prevent therefore such inconveniences in *calculation*, the taske at length was layd on those of *Alexandria*, as held the best *Mathematicians* after *Ptolemies* time. And hence we haue the *Paschales*, as yearely *Almanackes* sent abroad by them, to informe all other

other Churches, and mainetaine vniformitie. *Eusebius* mentioneth some of these Epistles, sent first by *Dionysius* even vnder the persecution. Three of that kinde are now extant vnder the name of *Theophilus Alexandrinus*, translated into Latine by Saint *Hierome*, and lastly reprinted in the last *Bibliotheca Patrum* at Colen, containing, besides the evidence of the *custome* of keeping *Easter*, matter well worth the reading. And to intimate that onely, which time will not suffer mee farther to enlarge, a man shall hardly turne ouer the *Ancients*, but euer and anon hee shall fall vpon *Sermons*, or *Homilies* for *Easter*, *questions* and *answers* concerning the exact forme of keeping *Easter*: *Hymnes* and *Anthems* composed for the celebration of *Easter*: Facts of greatest consequence reserued, as Baptizing of the *Catechumeni*, *Absoluing* of the *Excommunicated*, *Receiuing* of the *Lords Supper*, in most solemne manner; and all for the honour of this great Day. The feast of *first fruits*, this *rosh hashanah*, (containing many mysteries, besides common solemnities) this holy time of *Easter*: It is strange, to obserue how many bookes wee finde written together, by the most devout men, even in times of persecution, by *Anatolius Bishop of Laodicea*, *Theophylus*, *of Cæsarea*, *Baccillus*, *of Corinth*, *Melito*, *of Sardis*, *Irenæus*, *of Lions*, *Hyppolitus*, the Martyr, and the great Doctour *Clemens Alexandrinus*; and all for the due maintaining of this custome of keeping *Easter*. *Chrysostome* deposed, and *Athanasius* wanting a fit place, would needs

needs notwithstanding *keepe Easter*: the one, in a spacious *roome* built for the *publike Baths* of *Constantinople*; the other, in a *Church* at *Alexandria* not consecrated: So hainous a matter they thought it to neglect the due obseruing of Easter.

12 And to come at length to our owne selues, and customes, derived from sacred antiquity, what meanes our preparation by a Lent-fast, the solemne repetition of these *Easter Sermons*, rather then any other, the extraordinary *concourse* to the *Lords supper*, at this time of the yeere especially, but to draw vs by all circumstances, to reckon with him for our *Easter duties*, that hath so effectually payed our *first fruits* for vs, at this holy time of *Easter*? What these duties are, our Apostle elsewhere sheweth. As Christ was raised vp by the Glory of the *Father*, so wee also should walke in *newnesse of life*. *And if wee bee risen with Christ, why seeke we not those things which are aboue?* Col. 3. 1. Our *dulnesse* in our *vocations*, *deadnesse* in our *deuotions*, *faintnesse* at the approach of *death*, and the graue, are arguments that these *Resurrection Sermons* cannot be too often *repeated*. *Wherefore, brethren*, be ye *stedfast* and *immoueable*, *alwaies abounding* in this worke of the *Lord*, for as much as you know that your *labour* is not in vaine in the *Lord*. For what crosse or temptation can amaze a Christian soule, that can make but the true vse of this short text, *Christ is risen againe, and become the first fruits of them that slept*: Turne such a man to fight with *beasts*, *after the manner* Rom. 6. 4.

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of men, present before him the *stake* or *torture*; the assurance of his restoring by the *Resurrection*, is a *Supersedeas* to him in all his trials. Vpon this affiance he will professe with old *Ignatius*, that it belongeth to *Gods wheate*, to be *ground* with *beasts teeth*: he will resolutely, with Saint *Laurence* on the Gridiron, offer *both sides* to bee *broyled*. In losses, in sickenesse, in disgraces, in all assaults of Satan, in the pangs of death, hee will bee alwaies repeating with Iob, I know *that my redeemer liueth, and that he shall stand at the latter day vpon the earth*, and though *after my skin, wormes destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God*. Last of all, in the death of our parents, and children, brethren, sisters, or friends, or any other, who are neere and deare vnto vs, what comfort so present as this, so surely grounded, so fit to be applyed, That *Christ is risen from the dead*, hath *satisfied* the vtmost *farthing*, hath broken vp the *prison*, turned the *death* of the faithfull into a *sleepe*, out of which, by vertue of his *Resurrection*, they are to awake *againe*, vnto a farre more happy estate. Seeing therefore that Christ our *Passeover* hath beene thus *sacrificed* for vs, and payed the *first fruits* whereby wee are restored, and reconciled to God the Father, let vs keepe *this feast not with old leaven, neither with the leauen of malice* and *wickednes*, nor *dicing*, nor absurd *dancing*, or *ridiculous legend-preaching* to make the people laugh, which *Durand* and *Beleth* commend in their *popish Bishops*, as *Hospinian* at large declareth, but with the vnleauened bread of *sincerity* and truth: This is the

Iob. 19.

day

day which the Lord hath made, let vs *reioyce and be glad in it*, Let our hearts *dance* for *ioy*, and in our ſongs let vs praiſe him. Tell it out among the heathen, and when our children or Iuniors ſhall aske, what meane theſe *ſolemnities* at this time that the Church is ſo carefull to obſerue, before any other; let vs amply relate vnto them, how we were vtterly loſt in *Adam*, and became the *priſoners* of ſinne, *death* and *hell*: but now is Chriſt *riſen againe*, *the firſt fruits* of them that ſleepe, for their everlaſting recovery; the benefit whereof, by no triumphs, laud, and thankeſgiuing, can bee ſufficiently expreſſed. O thou therefore that of *ſtones* canſt raiſe vp children vnto *Abraham*, and reviued'ſt *Lazarus* when hee ſtanke in his graue, make our dead hearts ſenſible of the vertue of thy *Reſurrection*, that ſeconding thy *firſt fruits* with a ſerious awaking to righteouſneſſe, wee may triumphantly meete death in the face with this happy ἐπινίκιον, *O death, where is thy ſting? ô graue where is thy victory?* Heare vs ô Lord, for *his* ſake, who died for our ſinnes, and roſe againe for our juſtification: to whom with thee and the bleſſed *Spirit*, be all praiſe and glory both now and ever. *Amen.*